

**Written Testimony
By Bruce Hagensen, Board Member
Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust**

In support of H.R. 2099

Chairman Radanovich, and Members of the Subcommittee of National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands:

I am Bruce Hagensen, former Mayor of Vancouver and a member of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust board of directors, here before you to testify on behalf of H.R. 2099, to amend the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 to provide adequate funding authorization for the Vancouver National Historic Reserve.

Royce Pollard, the esteemed Mayor of Vancouver Washington has used his oral and written testimony to provide you with the background of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve. Designated by Congress through the National Preservation Act of 1996, it has been recognized as the most historically significant site in the Pacific Northwest. It is truly an American treasure.

Partnerships that Work: A Record of Achievement

For over half a century local, state and federal government agencies, along with numerous private individuals and organizations, have been collaborating to preserve and interpret the history of the Vancouver area and the region.

The 1996 Vancouver National Historic Reserve (VNHR) designation established a partnership among the landowners in the 366-acre Historic Reserve the National Park Service, the city of Vancouver, the U.S. Army, and the Washington State Historic Preservation Office. The Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust (VNHR Trust), a nonprofit organization, established in 1998 as an outgrowth of an earlier citizens' project, helps support the Historic Reserve and brings private resources into the partnership.

The VNHR, in the heart of the city of Vancouver, Washington includes the following components:

- Fort Vancouver National Historic Site
- Vancouver Barracks and Officers Row
- Pearson Air Field
- Portions of the Columbia River Waterfront
- Kaiser Shipyards and Viewing Tower
- The Water Resources Education Center

This remarkable public/private partnership has benefited many of the entities within the Historic Reserve boundaries. During the past 15 years in excess of \$30 million has been invested in property improvements and projects within the present Vancouver National Historic Reserve boundaries, mostly from non-federal sources. The federal government has provided approximately 25% of the capital funds. The remaining 75% has been provided by local and state government, foundations such as the locally based M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, and numerous other individuals, businesses and not-for-profit organizations.

Immeasurable in-kind dollars have been provided as well by a legion of dedicated volunteers.

The following are a sample of remarkable Historic Reserve projects that have occurred:

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site

- Fur Store Reconstructed/Archaeological Collections Facility, 1993
- Carpenter Shop completed, 1998
- Construction of 1845 Counting House/Commander Thomas Baillie residence, 1999ongoing
- Restored landscape following the removal of more than thirty hangers, 2000
- Jail, archaeology excavations and reconstruction, 2001
- Archaeology surveys, excavation, and research at Hudson's Bay Company cemetery, Company (Kanaka) Village, Parade Ground, Pearson Munitions and Headquarters buildings
- Cultural resource management
- Interpretive and Education programs, including tours, exhibits, and reenactments.

Officers Row

In 1986, the city of Vancouver saved 21 historic homes on Officers Row and accomplished a signature project for Vancouver. The Row is financially self-sustaining and is a nationally-recognized example of a mixed use preservation project that has brought economic and public benefit to the community.

Pearson Field and M.J. Murdock Aviation Museum

- Completion of M.J. Murdock Aviation Museum, largely with private funding, 1997
- The last series of non-historic hangars are being removed from National Park Service property, Spring 2002
- Full build out of new hangars away from Historic Reserve property, 2000
- Rehabilitation of the Munitions and Headquarters Buildings, 2001

Vancouver National Historic Reserve Visitor Center at the Gen. O.O. Howard House

- Renovation and reuse of historic post commander's quarters as VNHR Visitor Center and administrative offices, 1998
- A nationally recognized museum exhibit, One Place across Time: Vancouver National Historic Reserve, providing the visitor with a comprehensive overview of the Historic Reserve within national and international contexts, 1998
- Educational publications and programs include books, documentary videos, exhibits and school curricula

Celebrate Freedom Programs

- Fourth of July, Flag Day and Veterans Day Events
- George C. Marshall Lectures: Past lecturers include Daniel Inouye (2002), Tom Brokaw (2000), Madeline Albright (1998), and Colin Powell (1991).
- George C. Marshall Leadership Award for emerging young adults in public service
- George C. Marshall Youth Leadership Award recognizing public service in a high school student

Columbia River Waterfront Projects

- Trails and Parks
- Historical markers and sculptures
- Water Resources Education Center

Vancouver Barracks Preservation and Reuse Project

- Planning 1998 and continuing:
 - Vancouver Barracks Physical History Study, 1998. Report and resource guide prepared by the National Park Service describing selected buildings.
 - Vancouver Barracks Environmental Assessment, 1999. Report prepared by the U.S. Army analyzing current conditions at Vancouver Barracks.
 - Vancouver Barracks Adaptive Reuse & Economic Analysis, 2000. A cooperative effort of the Reserve Partners and the Reserve Trust analyzed alternative property use scenarios and the cost of rehabilitation and adaptation for new uses of 16 West Barracks buildings.
 - American Red Cross Convalescent House, constructed in 1919, has been designated as an Official Project of Save America's Treasures, with endorsement from the national president of American Red Cross.

An Outstanding Record of Achievement: A Vision for the Future

The theme “Preserving the Past, Shaping The Future” guides the Vancouver National Historic Reserve partners’ vision for the future. We continue to identify, preserve and adapt for the benefit of the public structures on the Historic Reserve. We provide opportunities for more than 500,000 annual regional, national, and international visitors to access the site and educational programs that tell the stories of this “One Place across Time.” The Historic Reserve offers opportunities for learning experiences preparing citizens for productive lives and leadership roles in society.

Vancouver Barracks Project: The VNHR Partnership in Action

At the present time the City of Vancouver is proposing to proceed with a project to preserve and reuse the west area of the Vancouver Barracks, home to the U.S. military for over 150 continuous years. The Vancouver Barracks was the first U.S. Army post in the Pacific Northwest and served as the headquarters for the vast Department of the Columbia. Vancouver Barracks was a center for U.S. military operations in the region for the last half of the 19th century and into the 20th century. National mobilization efforts took place here, supplying lumber and ships for two world wars.

This project will be a major step toward achieving the goals for the Historic Reserve as established in the 1999 Cooperative Management Plan (CMP). Preserving and protecting these irreplaceable historic assets will bring new sustainable uses to this rare urban park, and at the same time, bring its past alive to current audiences. Historic places, buildings and furnished rooms bring history alive in a powerful way. The Interpretive Plan for the Historic Reserve specifies restoring and furnishing several rooms at Vancouver Barracks appropriate to the period of the Army’s use.

While specific uses for each of the seventeen buildings are in the process of being determined, it is intended

that the property will be used for formal and informal educational programs for both residents of the area and visitors to the Historic Reserve. Educational planning work for Vancouver Barracks has involved the Partners, leaders from school districts, the local and national arts community, and nonprofit executives from regional cultural organizations. The Partners and Reserve Trust are currently facilitating dialog among organizations to develop collaborative and innovative educational programs. These discussions involve Washington State University, Clark College, Educational Services District 112, the National Park Service and the 104th Infantry Training Division of the U.S. Army Reserve.

However, the Vancouver Barracks site infrastructure is dangerously outdated and will need to be replaced as soon as possible. The buildings are deteriorating and need major work to comply with building safety codes that would be applicable to any new public use. The longer the barracks buildings remain unoccupied, the threat to the buildings by vandalism, potential water damage, fire, and further structural deterioration will increase, thereby increasing costs of restoration. Therefore, it is critically important that action be taken as quickly as possible.

Based on the Vancouver Barracks Adaptive Re-use & Economic Analysis completed in early 2000, it has been determined that the rehabilitation of buildings, and site, plus the adaptations necessary for new uses, will cost approximately \$40,000,000 provided the work can be done in a four year time span.

The analysis clearly indicates that revenues, to be derived largely from space rental, would not be sufficient to finance this project with long-term debt. Consequently, it has been determined the full amount must be raised from public and private sources.

West Area Funding Proposal

The continued federal appropriation monies for the Vancouver National Historic Reserve will be committed to this important project. The VNHR Trust has determined that federal funding, sufficient to permit site work and building rehabilitation to begin in late 2002, must be obtained now to trigger initiation of the project. A total federal contribution of \$20 million (FY20032005) is needed to match non-federal funding for the West Barracks project. This action is deemed key to successful private fundraising efforts, securing tenants for the property, minimizing the impact of inflation, and avoiding additional serious property deterioration.

The \$20 million federal commitment will be matched by non-federal dollars, *two to one*.

Federal		
Rehab/Preservation	\$20 million	37%
Non-Federal		
City of Vancouver	\$6 million	11%
Infrastructure/Site (20012004)		
State of Washington	\$6 million	11%
Adaptation for Educational Uses (20022005)		
Private	\$8 million	15%*

The Vancouver National Historic Reserve, established by Congress in 1996, has been recognized as the most historically significant site in the Pacific Northwest. It is truly an American treasure. For over half a century local, state and federal agencies, along with numerous private individuals and organizations have been collaborating to preserve and interpret the history of the Vancouver area and the region.

During the past 15 years in excess of \$30 million has been invested in property improvements and projects within the present Historic Reserve boundaries. The federal government has provided approximately 25% of the capital funds. The remaining 75% has been provided by local and state government, foundations such as the locally based M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, and numerous individuals, businesses and not-for-profit organizations.

On behalf of the members of the Reserve Trust, I want to reiterate to members of Congress our ongoing commitment to match and exceed federal monies. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Edward C. Lynch
Chairman

Thank you for your consideration.